



Protecting the Oxbow property in the Taunton River Watershed has been a regional conservation priority since 1988.



The mighty Taunton River and its 562 square miles of watershed provide clean drinking water, outstanding habitat, agricultural resources, and recreational opportunities for the region.

## An Oxbow Incident

Land conservation work often requires its practitioners to adopt a longer view, and to demonstrate and nurture patience—as well as a healthy dose of stubbornness!

By Scott MacFaden, *Land Protection Specialist*

Although project opportunities sometimes materialize quickly, and disappear just as rapidly, other projects remain available but ever elusive, tempting us from time to time to mobilize our resources and take another run. The recently completed Raynham Oxbow/Swansea Project is a classic example of the latter phenomenon.

The Raynham Oxbow has long been a conservation priority because of its abundant ecological, scenic, recreational, and agricultural values. The founders of the Taunton River Watershed Alliance first identified the Oxbow as a property of interest in 1988. Building on TRWA's example and a 1998 Upper Taunton River Natural Resource Inventory prepared by former Trust biologist Brian Reid,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7



The Wildlands Trust is a non-profit organization dedicated to conserving land and preserving the natural heritage of Southeastern Massachusetts. We work to permanently protect and steward important habitats and landscapes, including woodlands and fields, ponds, coastal areas, agricultural lands, and river systems.

# A Lot of Patience and a Healthy dose of Stubbornness

Patience is a virtue, but I've never been very good at it. Despite this admitted shortcoming, I am well aware that there are many slices of life that require it in the purest form. For example, being a mother requires gobs of patience, and like most parents, I work hard not to fall off the patience wagon with my 3 boys. (I get plenty of practice!)

But I am coming to realize that patience takes on a whole new twist at a land trust, because if you can't take the long view you will never accomplish some of the most important projects.

I've discovered this watching Scott MacFaden, our Land Protection Specialist. Day after day, week after week, Scott spends the vast majority of his hours on the phone and meeting with people to build the relationships necessary to move projects forward. He understands that his job is primarily about the slow process of developing trust with landowners, developers, state agencies, funders, attorneys, surveyors, appraisers and town boards. Fortunately, he possesses great affability and conversation skills, but most importantly, Scott is a patient man.

This September, under Scott's leadership, the Trust became the proud owner of a 64-acre parcel known as the "Oxbow," which stretches over a mile along the Taunton River. Among its many biological attributes are superior agricultural soils, beautiful open fields, upland forest, flood plains, and vernal pools.

Glitch after glitch, setback after setback, Scott maintained his commitment to protect this rare gem. Eight years later, his work is finally done.



Karen Grey  
Executive Director



Scott spends the majority of his time building the relationships necessary to move projects forward.

## 2008-09 Board of Directors

### PRESIDENT

Doug Hart/*Duxbury*

### VICE PRESIDENT

LeBaron R. Briggs IV/*Plymouth*

### SECRETARY

Michael Nuesse/*Hull*

### TREASURER

Michael J. Hanlon/*Plymouth*

Philip B. Benjamin/*S. Easton*

Lynn Cornelius/*Scituate*

Peter Demuth/*Newton*

Crystal Farrar Gould/*N. Marshfield*

Jerry Ingersoll/*Buzzards Bay*

Shirley Muirhead Jenkins/*Duxbury*

Ken Johnston/*Duxbury*

Cap Kane/*Duxbury*

Pam Kirkpatrick/*Swansea*

Gary Langenbach/*Kingston*

Kenneth C. Leonard/*Lakeville*

Greg Lucini/*Berkley*

Ellen Milt/*Plymouth*

Wayne R. Petersen/*Hanson*

Les Plimpton/*Plymouth*

Howard Randall/*Plympton*

Charlotte Russell/*Plymouth*

### EMERITA

Helen Philbrick/*Duxbury*

## Staff

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Karen H. Grey

### ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Gabriela Silva, Ph.D.

### DIRECTOR OF STEWARDSHIP

Jessica Schultz

### LAND PROTECTION SPECIALIST

Scott MacFaden

### PRESERVES MANAGER

Jim Dehner

### EXTERNAL RELATIONS

Sue Chamberlain

### MEMBERSHIP COORDINATOR

Kay Foster

### ACCOUNTING

Lisa Burch

### MAPPING AND GIS

Marilyn Levandoski

Administrative offices of The Wildlands Trust are located at 165 West Street, Duxbury.

FOR INFORMATION about membership or the benefits of conveying land or conservation (including agricultural) restrictions to the Trust, call or write:

The Wildlands Trust of Southeastern Massachusetts  
P.O. Box 2282  
Duxbury, MA 02331  
(781) 934-9018 Phone  
(781) 934-8110 Fax

www.wildlandstrust.org



# From Duxbury in the East to Swansea in the West

Recent acquisitions underscore the full geographic scope of the Trust's conservation activities in southeastern Massachusetts.



## Oxbow Preserve

63 ACRES, RAYNHAM

Important species habitat, freshwater and tidal marshes, open fields, woods, and 14-acre oxbow island.

- ⊙ Wetlands
- ⊙ Deciduous Forest
- ⊙ Mixed Woodlands
- ⊙ Upland Fields
- ⊙ Coniferous Woodland
- ⊙ Priority Species
- ⊙ Critical Habitat
- ⊙ Tidal River

safeguarding the river's scenic beauty. The Oxbow property supports many significant natural communities, including wooded and shrub swamps and extensive freshwater and brackish tidal marshes. With some of the most productive agricultural soils in Southeastern Massachusetts, the parcel's fields offer important grassland habitats for a variety of migratory birds.



## Swansea Conservation Area

32 ACRES, SWANSEA

Woods and forested wetlands on the MA-RI state line.

- ⊙ Wetlands
- ⊙ Deciduous Forest
- ⊙ Mixed Woodlands
- ⊙ Upland Fields
- ⊙ Coniferous Woodland
- ⊙ Priority Species
- ⊙ Critical Habitat
- ⊙ Pond and/or River

Oxbow Preserve, with 65 acres of outstanding natural habitats and over one mile of Taunton River shoreline, has been a conservation priority for over 2 decades. (See our cover story.) The property's extensive riparian areas are important for a variety of species and are essential to

Swansea Conservation Area's 32 acres expand Wildlands' holdings in the Town of Swansea to 139 acres. A blend of upland woods and forested wetlands, this primarily wooded property mainly provides important habitats to small mammals and other critters.



## Cedar Hill CR

12 ACRES, DUXBURY

500 feet of frontage on Kingston Bay with sand dunes, grasses, mixed oak and pine woods, and views.

- ⊙ Wetlands
- ⊙ Deciduous Forest
- ⊙ Mixed Woodlands
- ⊙ Upland Fields
- ⊙ Coniferous Woodland
- ⊙ Priority Species
- ⊙ Critical Habitat
- ⊙ Ocean and/or Bay

The 12-acre Cedar Hill CR directly abuts another 12-acre CR held by Wildlands. This property offers some 500 feet on Kingston Bay, extensive sand dunes, grasses of high conservation value, mixed oak and pine woods, and scenic views from both land and water.

## Wildlands Trust Adds Key Staff to Help Build Capacity

Two new hires expand our capabilities and broaden our expertise in stewardship and development.



The Trust extends a hearty welcome to Jim Dehner, Preserves Manager and Sue Chamberlain, External Relations

Developing the capacity to care for the lands we acquire has become a priority for the Wildlands Trust. It all starts with building the people power to get the job done, and this fall we took a leap of faith when a fantastic candidate came along. This September Jim Dehner joined the Trust, bringing with him a broad knowledge and experience in land trust operations and stewardship practices. Prior to coming to the Trust, Jim worked for the Trustees of Reservations and the Northeast Wilderness Trust, and was co-founder of the Ashburnham Conservation Trust. Jim holds a Bachelors Degree in Environmental Studies from Unity College and a Masters Degree in Resource Management and Administration from Antioch University.

Providing opportunities for the public to have the best possible experiences when visiting conservation lands is a vital aspect of our commitment at the Trust. We are delighted to have Jim on board overseeing the management of the Trust's Preserves.

Sue Chamberlain is in a league of her own when it comes to environmental fundraising, and there is a simple explanation for this: she is passionate about conservation.

The Trust was (again!) very fortunate this fall when Sue, a 25-year veteran fundraiser, decided it was a time for a change in her professional routine. Having served as the Development Director at the Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences for the past 7 years, Sue opted to redirect her skills to help raise funds for local conservation. "I want to give something back to the region I live in, I believe in land trusts and I want to try to help save land in southeastern Mass."

Sue will be consulting for us one day per week (our modest budget being the constraint!)

Sue says she is most impressed with the hard working and dedicated staff at the Trust. "Every time I come here I see an incredible commitment, and I am proud to fundraise for all the great conservation work going on at Wildlands."

## Improving the Visitor Experience

It's a great feeling when we create a trailhead and watch families, student groups, and folks on their lunch break explore the trails we've created.

The Wildlands Trust has successfully conserved over 5,600 acres of properties from Braintree to Swansea to Bourne, and it is now time for multiple staff to oversee these commitments.

New Preserve Manager, Jim Dehner, and I have been making the rounds to many of our properties, discussing opportunities and challenges unique to each. With his help we will be able to grow the capacity of our Stewardship Program by providing increased oversight as well as implementing new projects and management objectives that have been on our wishlist for some time.

One of the challenges is determining how best to facilitate visitor enjoyment while balancing the protection of sensitive habitat areas, wildlife, wetlands, and other natural and archeological resources. Inviting the public allows for enhanced understanding of precious natural areas but also brings risks. We must always weigh access with safety and security.

This fall we are completing projects at several of our preserves including, Cow Tent Hill Preserve in Duxbury, Pudding Hill Reservation in Marshfield, Six Ponds East Preserve and Halfway Pond Conservation Area in Plymouth. This work is funded through several grants including the Makepeace Neighborhood Fund, Entergy Foundation, and the Seth Sprague Charitable Foundation.

Over the coming year you will see Jim and me working hard to maintain and improve these and other accessible properties. Our donors have entrusted us with providing the high level of protection and management that all our properties deserve. We will continue to provide that level of care. With greater flexibility and energy, we will be increasing visibility, making community connections, and responding to problems as they emerge so that our members, our neighbors, and our communities might gain even greater appreciation for these special areas we all love.



LET US HELP YOU  
FIND A HOME  
FOR YOUR TRUSTY  
NOT-TOO-OLD TRUCK

Wildlands Trust is in the market for a reliable truck or 4-wheel drive vehicle for our Stewardship Program. If you—or someone you know—is trying to sell a truck, perhaps donating it to us in exchange for a charitable deduction is a practical option.

Call Jessica at 781.934.9018.

The experiences in the field of Jessica Schultz, director of stewardship, are the subject of the *Stewardship Journal*.

## Situations We Are Tracking

Keeping our ear to the ground and a seat at the table is a big part of the work we do at the Trust. Here are some of the issues we are working on that may be of interest to you.

### Plymouth County Commissioners Consider Development in South Plymouth

In an effort to raise funds to sustain the operations of the County government, the Plymouth County Commissioners are exploring options to develop several large tracts of open space they own in Plymouth. Given the development already slated for south Plymouth, including Makepeace and Plymouth Rock Studios, the Trust is working with the County to see if these lands can be acquired as open space, instead of being developed for commercial or residential purposes.

### Land and Water License Plate Needs Your Support

The Massachusetts Environmental Trust has launched a new license plate campaign to support land protection programs across the State. Proceeds from the new plate will be segregated into a fund to provide grants for land acquisition and stewardship projects. However, we need your help because in order to begin producing the new license plate, the State requires 3,000 applications. Please call Kay at the Trust if you would like us to send you the application.

### Plymouth Rock Studios

On October 27, Plymouth Town Meeting voted overwhelmingly in favor of a zoning change that paves the way for a 14-studio film production facility to be built on the 240-acre Waverly Oaks golf course in south Plymouth. In anticipation of that decision, the Trust has spent the last 7 months working with studio executives and their engineers, and town officials, to help minimize the environmental impacts of certain aspects of the project, particularly the proposed access road through a piece of town-owned conservation land. As the studio project moves ahead, we look forward to aggressively pursuing land acquisition in the neighborhood to preserve as much open space as possible.

### The Best of Times, the Worst of Times

It's ironic that a slowing economy usually presents solid opportunities to save land, as real estate prices drop and developers reconsider their plans. Very soon our annual appeal will appear in your mail box. We hope you will give as generously as possible.

Your gift will help us protect over 2,000 new acres that are currently on our radar.

We appreciate your support.

THANK-YOU FROM  
THE BOTTOM OF OUR  
THERMOSTATS



Thanks to our friends Ron Hunter of Patagonia's corporate office and Nik Gualco of the Boston Patagonia store. Together, they arranged for a warm donation of vests and jackets for the Wildlands staff (modeled above). We encourage our members to patronize companies like Patagonia which, as part of their corporate mission, direct profits to support environmental causes.

## Thank You For Your Contribution

The Trust relies on private philanthropy to fund the work we do to save land throughout the region. You, our members, *are* the Wildlands Trust. Thank you for your vision and dedication to keeping land preserved for future generations.

### Welcome New Members

We welcome these new members who joined the Trust between July and October 2008:

Eve Ayling, *Plymouth*  
Ana & Jonathan Baker, *Marshfield*  
Barbara Brennessel, Ph.D., *Norton*  
Lauren & Chris Cioca, *N. Marshfield*  
Green Family, *Marshfield*  
Russ Hall, *Plymouth*  
Doug & Karen McArdle, *Marshfield Hills*  
North & South Rivers Garden Club, *Scituate*  
Tom & Calder Reardon, *Newton*  
Brian & Susan Sylva, *Pocasset*  
Peter Tcherepnine, *New York, NY*  
Michael & Nicole Thiffault, *Pembroke*  
Phyllis Troia, *Plymouth*  
Gray Watson, *Lexington*

### In Memory Of

GARY HOBLER  
-Mrs. Myra Hobler, *Amherst, NY*

PHYLLIS HOWE  
-Mark Mahoney & Ilene Horvitz, *Duxbury*

PETER F. MCLEOD  
-Mr. & Mrs. Jeffery A. Doughty, *Quincy*

PATRICIA O'DONNELL  
-Ann Thomas, *Duxbury*

**NOT A MEMBER?**  
Use the envelope enclosed or call  
781-934-9018 to join today!

### In Honor Of

ELIZABETH STACEY  
ON THE OCCASION  
OF HER BIRTHDAY  
-Mark Mahoney & Ilene Horvitz, *Duxbury*

### Thank You, Volunteers!

Thanks for all you do — the Trust wouldn't be where it is without volunteers.

-Ruth Anderson	-Joe Keating
-Janet Curtis	-Barbara Kelley
-Chuck Foster	-Nature's Navigators
-Mary Gartung	4-H Science Club
-Kris Gaskins	-Marcy Stanton
-Carol Glaubin	-Roz Thompson
-Mary Hathaway	-John Tinker

## An Oxbow Incident

— CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

the Trust subsequently established the Oxbow as a priority. Our preservation efforts have continued intermittently since the late 1990's, and included working with a former owner to try and find an agricultural buyer for the property. The most recent owner, Ron Medeiros, purchased it in 2001, and the Trust had occasional discussions with him about a potential project that didn't really intensify until March 2007.

The Oxbow is one of only four top priority areas for conservation identified in the 1998 Natural Resource Inventory, largely because of its diverse habitats and one mile of Taunton River frontage. It includes a 14-acre oxbow island with an esker, large oak trees, one of the larger areas of freshwater tidal marsh along the upper Taunton River, and large stands of wild rice. The oxbow area also provides resting habitat for migratory wood and black ducks. The balance of the premises includes open fields maintained by annual mowing and areas of bottomland forest and red maple swamp. Situated within these wooded habitats are several vernal pools.

The property's soils are rated Class I and Class II, and are among the most fertile in Bristol County. Several former owners pursued a variety of agricultural uses, including growing row crops and grazing cows, but in recent years haying has comprised the primary agricultural activity.

The Oxbow property does not include road frontage, and at present we obtain our access via two easements. The configuration of these easements limits our ability to provide public access consistent with our usual practices, as they include no room for parking and are sufficient only for our management access. However, paddlers will be able to access the property from the river.

Contacted recently to offer his perspective on the Oxbow acquisition, Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District Senior Environmental Planner and TRWA co-founder Bill Napolitano said, "It's amazing that twenty years could pass so quickly and yet seem like only yesterday. It's even more amazing that with all of the development that

has occurred in our region in the last twenty years, that this regional gem is still intact and has lost none of its original luster. The Wildlands Trust has helped us to realize one of the most significant goals of the original Taunton River Conservation and Management Plan — to secure the Oxbow."

Funding for this project came from the Sheehan Family Foundation and the Bafflin Foundation, two champions of land conservation in Southeastern Massachusetts. The Sheehan Foundation in particular has been a consistent and generous supporter of the Trust's land protection efforts for over a decade, and we are again grateful for their contributions to preserving our region's natural heritage.

The Trust also wishes to acknowledge Ron Medeiros for his patience, creativity, and willingness to work with the conservation community.

Green inset photo on page 1:  
Taken at Peace Haven by Al Lima



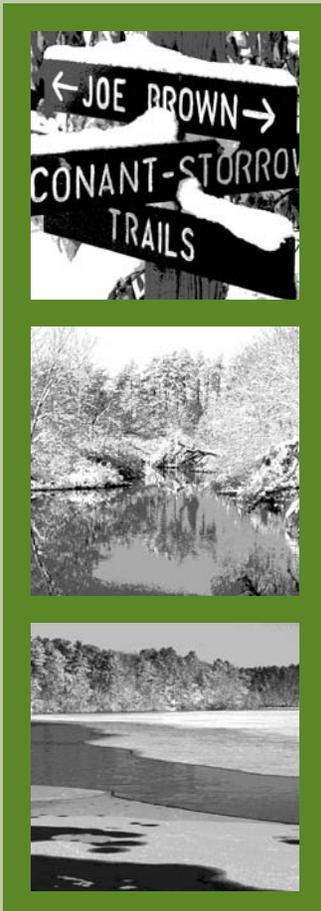
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



## PROPERTY SPOTLIGHT

### HALFWAY POND CONSERVATION AREA Plymouth, MA

**A visit to the unique Halfway Pond Conservation Area is a treat any time of the year — but winter is an especially magical season.**



Take a brief walk or spend a whole day exploring Halfway Pond's extensive network of scenic, interconnected, well-marked trails. Snowshoeing, back country skiing, or hiking in the open woodlands is a great way to enjoy the winter.

Five separate preserves make up the area in Plymouth we refer to as the Halfway Pond Conservation Area: West Shore Preserve; Taylor-Touster Wildlands; Gallows Pond Preserve; Conant-Storrov Nature Preserve; and Big Point Preserve. These properties are some of the Trust's earliest holdings and were acquired through the extraordinary planning, leadership, and generosity of LeBaron R. Briggs III, and other local families. Diverse habitats — from pine barrens and pond shores to beech and mixed hardwood forests — support a rich variety of plants and animals.

Take Route 3 to Exit 3 to Long Pond Road to Mast Road. Trailhead parking is two miles on right before Halfway Pond. For detailed directions and a map of the Halfway Pond Conservation Area, visit [www.wildlandstrust.org](http://www.wildlandstrust.org)

